(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when, the scheme is likely to be accomplished?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVILAVIATION (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) to (c) The following steps have been taken to improve air links in Leh in Jammu and Kashmir, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep:

(i) In the Winter Schedule effective 26th October, 2003, Indian Airlines' operations on the sector Jammu-Leh-Jammu has been increased to 4 times a week and operation on the sector Leh-Srinagar-Leh have been increased to 2 times a week.

(ii) Alliance Air operates services 5 times a week on the sector Kolkata- Port Blair- Kolkata and 4 times a week on the sector Chennai-Port Blair- Chennai with B-737 aircraft.

Besides, Alliance Air is operating additional services on the Kolkata/ Port Blair/ Kolkata route on Wednesdays and Sundays from 26th October, 2003 to 31st March, 2004, thus providing a daily service between Kolkata and Port Blair, uptil 31st March, 2004. Alliance Air has also planned additional flights on 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 25th, 27th, 28th, 29th and 30th December, 2003 on the sector Kolkata/ Port Blair/ Kolkata.

(iii) Indian Airlines operates 6 flights per week on the sectork Kochi-Agatti- Kochi and 3 flights per week on the sector Agatti-Goa- Agatti with DO228.

(iv) Jet Airways is also operating daily flight on sector Delhi-Leh-Delhi and Chennai-Port Blair-Chennai.

Linking of State capitals with Delhi

†2186. DR. AKHTAR HASAN RIZVI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the State capitals which have not yet been linked with Delhi through air;

(b) by when these are likely to be linked through air;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

(c) whether all State capitals of the country have been inter-linked ; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) Itanagar, Gangtok, Dehradun and Shimla are the only State capitals without air services by scheduled airlines. Other State capitals have direct or indirect air link with Delhi.

(b) Government has laid down Route Dispersal Guidelines with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services taking into account the need for air transport services of different regions of the country. It is, however, up to the airlines to provide air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability. As such, the airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country subject to compliance of Route Dispersal Guidelines issued by the Government.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Same as (b) above.

Representation from Trade Unions

2187. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government employees who retired in the month of February, March, April, 1996 could not get the full pensionary benefits because their pension was fixed on the basis of the pay fixed or drawn at the time of their retirement:

(b) whether Government have received any representations from various Trade Unions or individuals for fixation of pension on the basis of the pay last drawn instead of last ten months average; and

(c) if so, what action Government propose to take to remove the anomaly and by when orders to this effect are likely to be issued?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL): (a) Vide O.M. No. 45/86/97-P and PW (A)-Part-I dated 18.10.1999 issued by Department of Pension and Pensioners' Welfare, Government has already amended the existing rules